

## *THE PHILOSOPHY OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS*

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics (ICA) is actively engaged in the University community and is committed to the development of a competitive Division I program that is nationally recognized as a leader in the welfare of our student-athletes and professional staff. Mirroring the University, ICA is a community of students and professionals of diverse backgrounds embracing an informed appreciation of different views and cultures, as well as their own. Their quality of experiences will encompass the social, aesthetic and ethical development of all individuals represented in the program regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, veteran status, political orientation or sexual orientation.

A founding guideline of Division I athletics at UNCG states that, the student-athlete is first and foremost a student. ICA makes every effort to provide an environment for learning where the student-athlete's responsibilities are integral to their educational success inside and outside the formal classroom. The University provides numerous academic support programs aimed at assisting a student's academic growth. ICA seeks to further assist student-athletes by enhancing current academic programs and providing educational initiatives supplemental to those offered by the University. These initiatives are designed to stimulate intellectual, social, cultural, gender and personal development of the student-athlete. The goals of these programs are to promote the graduation of student-athletes at a rate equal to or greater than the overall undergraduate student population. A special emphasis is placed on maintaining comparable graduation rates for student-athletes in every demographic group.

ICA provides student-athletes the opportunity to exercise leadership while developing working relationships with others through the discipline of sustained team practices and training. ICA's commitment to each student-athlete is reflected in continued enhancement of the athletic training room and development of a strength and conditioning program. These programs are designed to build healthy minds and bodies while at the same time protecting the overall health and safety of the student-athletes. Full-time head coaches are employed for each sport with full-time assistant coaches, where funding permits. It is the responsibility of the coaching staff to maintain a positive relationship with their student-athletes. Both ICA administration and coaching staffs are committed to developing, fostering and maintaining open lines of communication with all student-athletes and professional staff members. These relationships must be based upon trust, which provides and enhances avenues for honest dialogue. Student-athletes are given the opportunity to be actively engaged with standing University committees that are focused on policies and procedures, as well as welfare, academic and governance issues of the University, Southern Conference and NCAA.

Adherence to rules and abiding by the principles of good sportsmanship are standards expected of all student-athletes and ICA professional staff. Protocols are designed to ensure compliance with University, State, Federal, Southern Conference and NCAA rules and regulations. The ICA administration is dedicated to operating its programs and managing the student-athletes and professional staff in a manner that is consistent with the expectations of each governing body.

ICA is committed to the principle of institutional control. Rules compliance education is an essential part of adherence to this principle. The Compliance Office distributes information and updates on a variety of topics to student-athletes, ICA and University staff and boosters. It is charged with coordinating, monitoring and verifying the day-to-day activities of each program as they relate to Southern Conference and NCAA rules and regulations.

ICA is committed to providing an environment for its teams, spectators, alumni and fans that embraces the principles of good sportsmanship and fair play. The development of character for its student-athletes, coaches, staff and fans promote the integrity associated with higher education and athletics. Coaches and student-athletes are held to high moral and ethical standards that are fundamental to competition. Ethical conduct, good manners and judicious choice of expressions are positive reflections on athletics and are principles under which our professional staff and student-athletes compete.

The quality of each student-athlete's experience must be equitable with regards to facility access, professional support, practice opportunities, event management and support services. Paramount to the quality of the student-athlete's experience is the development and maintenance of excellent athletic venues for practice and competition. ICA is dedicated to providing sufficient budgetary support for each sport to ensure that qualitative experiences for student-athletes on various teams will be comparable.

The philosophy of ICA is grounded in the firm beliefs and commitments of the University. It is the foundation for the development and implementation of a student centered approach to intercollegiate athletics. Through educational endeavors, students and professional staff are transformed into citizens who build communities that celebrate diversity and difference.

ICA seeks to retain current employees while actively recruiting and hiring a diverse pool of administrators, coaches and support staff. In like manner, ICA strives to retain current student-athletes while recruiting a diverse prospective student-athlete population. Conscious and deliberate recruitment is done to employ a staff of professionals and maintain a population of student-athletes reflective of the overall composition of the University. ICA is committed to providing educational opportunities for professionals and student-athletes to enhance their understanding and appreciation of people from diverse backgrounds and cultures. Our philosophy of diversity is based on a commitment to the concept and development of equal employment and recruitment of all persons regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, veteran status, political orientation or sexual orientation.